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SOTHEBY, WILKINSON, & HODGE will SELL by AUCTION, at their House, No. 13 Wellington Street, Strand, W.C., on MONDAY, December 17, and following day, at 1 o'clock precisely, the Collection of AUTOGRAPH LETTERS and LITERARY DOCUMENTS of the late Henry Porter, Esq., of Chelsea; Comprising Kings of England and France, distinguished statesmen, poets and dramatists, eminent men of letters, actors, artists, musical composers, historians, including many valuable letters and documents ranging over an interesting period of English and foreign history, mostly enriched with valuable biographical notes, &c., &c. quinian, and topographical notes, &c., &c. The late Autograph of Mr. Porter, with his best and greatest pain, in his selection from authentic sources, from which he has culled with great skill and judgment. May be viewed two days previous. Catalogues may be had; if by post, on receipt of four stamps.

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The twelve years which have elapsed since the CONTEMPORARY REVIEW was started have been years of change unexampled in rapidity; and nothing has varied more conspicuously than the complexion of public controversy on theological and philosophical questions. It would be trite to say that the old acrimony is gone—the change goes much deeper than that. We live in times when opinion, of whatever school, operates in massive currents. We cannot control these of our own side—we cannot even guide them; they take us up with them, and float us along, even when we fancy we are acting independently. The controversial method which were possible twelve years ago are now impracticable. While, on the other hand, there is a very largely increasing mass of cultivated opinion which is unfavourable not only to Christianity proper, but even to any living kind of Theism, there is an increased unwillingness in public controversy to admit any final antizionism. And there is also an increased desire on every side to hear, from qualified expounders, the case of every other side. Any editor who tries the experiment on a large scale will find that the highest questions of theology, philosophy, and secular and ecclesiastical politics cannot now be discussed by competent men on what might be called the old-fashioned terms of a positive and sectarian "platform," with occasional leave to a stranger to address the meeting for a few minutes, under direction of the Chair. An entirely new literature, which may be described as the Literature of the Higher Controversy, has sprung up. And the forms upon which controversy may now be carried on in this literature have been very greatly, if not supremely, influenced by the circumstance that, recent speculation having entered largely into the poetry and other imaginative literature of the hour, a new dialect has been formed. Nobody will contend that this fact—favourable as it undoubtedly is to sincere accommodations—is all of it so much to the good; but it is something more and better than a

help to courtesy in discussion—it saves many a wound to the heart and the nobler imagination. It would be hard to decide on which side of the two greater camps there has been the more readiness to come closer and closer by degrees to the other, and see how much can be settled without blows. But the results must be patent to us all.

To these results the REVIEW of which I have been the conductor has necessarily been sensitive—it has reflected them, does still reflect them, and cannot cease to do so without stultifying itself as a contemporary Review intended to maintain a high literary position. The attitude of such a Review is, of course, exceedingly difficult to adjust by mere editorial force. It may change from decide to decide, or even more frequently. It may by chance appear biased, now in one direction, and now in another. But as long as all aspects of the bigoted controversy are reflected in it, and so long as the literary quality of the matter is excellent, the periodical will, as a periodical, stand justified. The other point for which I am personally responsible is that in the CONTEMPORARY REVIEW, taken as a whole, the key-note of all the literature for which I have ever been personally responsible shall be distinctly heard—"We live by a limitation, hope, and love."

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CONTEMPORARY REVIEW Office, 34 Paternoster Row.

ALEXANDER STRAHAN.

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